RE: STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER ON W.T.O. CONFERENCE IN SEATTLE

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I raised a point of order when Mr. Chairman was in the Chair. He said that it would be taken up immediately before any substantial business. The point was on the List of Business, and it was raised under Rule 29. Yesterday's List of Business contained an item that the hon. Prime Minister would make an important statement on the WTO. But that item does not figure in today's List of Business. Members would be very keen on knowing the position of this very important issue, this very important statement.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, it is true that the day before yesterday, the Prime Minister had made in the Lok Sabha a statement on the Seattle Conference. It was listed yesterday in this House also. But, due to the unfortunate death of one of our colleagues, we could not transact the Business yesterday. In the normal course, it should have been listed today. But the Government thought this it this way. The Seattle Conference is almost ending tomorrow. That is, today according to the American time and tomorrow according to the Indian time. Monday morning the Minister himself will come here. In the Business Advisory Committee meeting, we thought that we should discuss next week the Seattle Conference through a full-fledged *suo motu* statement by the Government. Clarifications are sought here on a statement. There is nothing new that has happened during the last 48 hours. If we discuss about the Seattle Conference and its implications now, the Government thought that after the Minister came, there would be no point in making the same statement which would had been made almost 48 hours before in the Lok Sabha and which could not be made in Rajya Sabha yesterday. That is why, the Government, in consultation with the Business Advisory Committee, has withdrawn the statement of the Prime Minister. Next week the Members of the House will get an opportunity to discuss the entire Seattle Conference issue in the presence of the Commerce Minister, who is leading the delegation there.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): I believe this should satisfy all.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, the point that had been agreed upon....*(Interruptions)*

श्री संजय निरुपम (महाराष्ट्र): अभी चार स्पेशल मेंशन हैं पहले वे होने दीजिए वरना यह तो डिबेट शुरू हो गयी है। माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने जवाब दे दिया है। बहुत अच्छे ढंग से दे दिया है ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री जयन्त कुमार मल्होत्रा (उत्तर प्रदेश): आप एक मिनट रुकिए....**(व्यवधान)**... अच्छा आप बैठिए।

श्री संजय निरुपम: जो स्पेशल मेंशन एप्रूव किए गए हैं ...**(व्यवधान)**...उन पर चर्चा होनी चाहिए,...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री जयन्त कुमार मल्होत्रा: जो मंत्री महोदय ने बोला है वह सही नहीं है इसलिए मैं बोल रहा हूं। उन्होंने कहा है कि बिजिनेस एडवाइजरी कमेटी में बात हुई थी कि यह इन्फारमेशन ये हाउस को देंगे और बताएंगे कि मन्डे इन फैक्ट वहां से मंत्री आ रहे हैं लेकिन यह स्टेटमेंट नहीं दिया गया है। It was agreed that the Business Advisory Committee....*(Interruptions)*..

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Yesterday, the statement was to be made. But, due to the unfortunate death of one of our colleague, it could not be made.

SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: It was agreed in the Business Advisory Committee that the hon. Minister would inform the House in the morning.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the point is, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should have informed the House, before the question was raised. It is true that we had agreed on the point that he has said. The Government had said that if at this point of time we go into a detailed discussion of the issue, it might be embarrassing. Considering the broader dimension of the problem we had agreed. But this is not going to be a precedent for the future. Let it be recorded that it will not be a precedent for the future.